

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 2 and 4-6 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended and claims 3, and 7-24 are canceled. Support for amended claim 1 can be found in the specification at least in the original claims as filed, and at page 5, lines 22-24, page 6, lines 22-34, and page 7, lines 14-15. Thus, no new matter is added. In view of the amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over any of U.S. Patent No. 5,879,790 to Sogabe et al. ("Sogabe"), U.S. Patent No. 5,837,382 to Hiyashi et al. ("Hiyashi"), or U.S. Patent No. 6,210,794 to Nakamura ("Nakamura"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 is directed to a thermal transfer recording medium, comprising a base material, a peel layer laminated on the base material and including a candelilla wax (A), and an ink layer laminated on the peel layer and including a styrene resin (B), a binder component including ethylene-vinyl acetate copolymer (C), and a coloring component (D), wherein said wax is compatible with said styrene resin when within a weight ratio range of 10:90 to 90:10 of the wax and the styrene resin, respectively, and at a temperature at least 30°C more than the melting points of the wax (A) and the styrene resin (B), and the weight ratio of the styrene resin (B) to the binder component (C) ranges from 10:90 to 50:50. None of the cited references, alone or in any combination, teach or suggest a thermal transfer recording medium as claimed.

Nakamura describes a thermal transfer sheet that includes a substrate sheet (1), a release layer (3), a coloring layer (2) and an adhesive layer (4). However, Nakamura does not teach wax compatible with the resin at the wax to resin weight ratio range and thermal conditions, as claimed. Furthermore, Nakamura teaches the addition of wax into the resin of

the ink layer. In contrast, Applicants' recording medium requires the addition of wax to the peel layer. Finally, Nakamura does not teach or suggest a styrene resin:binder component ratio of 10:90 to 50:50, as claimed.

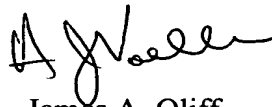
Like Nakamura, Sogabe and Hiyashi do not teach or suggest a thermal transfer recording medium that includes wax compatible with styrene resin when within the specified weight ratio and temperature ranges, as claimed. In addition, Sogabe and Hiyashi do not teach or suggest the claimed weight ratio of styrene resin to binder component.

For at least these reasons, Nakamura, Sogabe and Hiyashi either alone or in any combination would not have rendered obvious the thermal transfer recording medium of claim 1. Claims 2 and 4-6 depend from claim 1 and would also have not been obvious. Claims 3 and 7-24 are canceled, thus rendering moot their rejection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 2 and 4-6 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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